



# PDG B-5

Strategic Planning Fact Base  
October 2019

**DRAFT**  
*NOT FOR  
DISTRIBUTION*

# Agenda

## ► Overview of Landscape

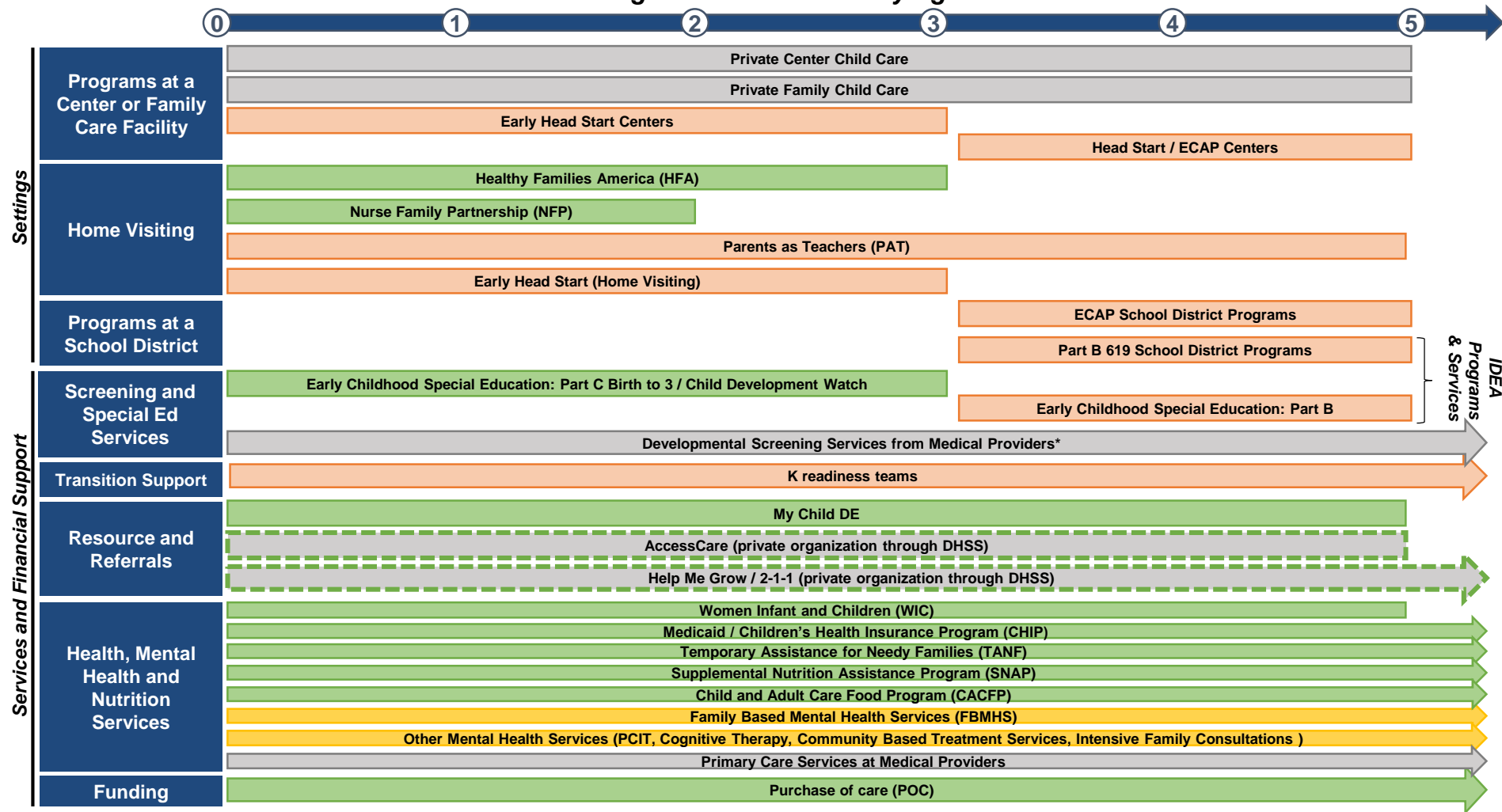
- Opportunities for Delaware's ECCE System
- Vision for Strategic Plan



# Overview of Landscape

Delaware's mixed delivery ECCE system offers an array programs/services for B-5 children and their families

## ECCE Programs and Services by Ages Served



IDEA Programs & Services

\*Developmental screenings services are often administered at third-party medical providers through Pediatricians, Family Physicians, Nurses, Physician Assistances, and Nurse Practitioners or at home by families themselves

Legend: Department Ownership

DOE

DHSS

KIDS

Private Organization



# Overview of Landscape

Over 30K unique children B-5 are currently being served through public programs and services within Delaware's ECCE system

|  |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
|  | <b>30,073 - 47,608</b><br><b>unique children B-5 served by the Delaware's public ECCE system as of Aug, 2019</b> | <b>~45-70%</b><br><b>of children B-5 in DE are being served</b> | <b>~67,000</b><br><b>total children B-5 in DE</b> |
|--|--|---|---|

| Programs at a Center or Family Care Facility | Home Visiting                              | Programs at a School District                | Screening and Special Ed Services          | Health, Mental Health and Nutrition Services |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| <b>1,209</b> enrolled in Head Start centers  | <b>277</b> enrolled in HFA and NFP         | <b>1,943</b> enrolled in Part B 619 programs | <b>1,413</b> receiving Part C CDW services | <b>27,418</b> receiving Medicaid             |
| <b>1,532*</b> enrolled in ECAP Programs      | <b>148**</b> enrolled in EHS Home Visiting | <b>1,532*</b> enrolled in ECAP Programs      |  | <b>17,161</b> receiving SNAP                 |
| <b>90</b> enrolled in EHS centers            | <b>490</b> enrolled in Parents as Teachers |  |  | <b>11,988</b> enrolled in WIC                |
|  |  |  |  | <b>10,346</b> receiving POC                  |
|  |  |  |  | <b>2,238</b> receiving CHIP                  |
|  |  |  |  | <b>1,692</b> receiving TANF                  |

**197 children waiting for services in the State of Delaware**




\*ECAP program counts are for school district and private center programs  
 \*\*The data collected for EHS does not well represent waitlisted children for EHS and HS because it is just before the start of the new program year. Another snapshot will be taken on 12/1/2019. It is also known that there is a waitlist for ECAP, however it is not tracked and maintained.  
 Source: PDG B-5 Data Systems Assessment, US Census

| Legend: Department Ownership |
|------------------------------|
| DHSS                         |
| DOE                          |



# Overview of Landscape

Delaware's B-5 ECCE program settings include programs at centers or family homes as well as home visiting and school district programs

| Summary Statistics of Core B-5 ECCE Program Settings |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| Program Settings                                     |  Programs at a Center or Family Care Facility (FCC) |  Home Visiting |  Programs at School Districts |
| Programs   | Child Care Centers   | Health Families America  | IDEA Part B programs in School Districts   |
|  | Family Child Care Facilities   | Parents as Teachers  |  |
|  | Large Family Child Care Facilities`  | Nurse Family Partnership   |  |
|  |  | Early Head Start   |  |
| 2018 Scale of programs                               | 979<br>total programs<br>(35% centers, 65% FCC)  | 4<br>evidence based<br>programs  | 15<br>districts serving students<br>with disabilities (SWDs)   |
|  | 40,978<br>total capacity<br>(86% centers, 14% FCC)   | 1,214<br>total capacity  | 5<br>districts also hosting ECAP<br>programs   |
| Cost of Programs                                     | ~\$12K (center) or 9K (FCC) per year*<br>at private programs<br>without POC subsidies  | Free<br>for eligible families  | Free<br>for Part B participants or<br>ECAP-eligible families<br>though typical peers pay a<br>nominal rate       |
| All families eligible?                               | ✓  | ✗  | ✗  |

*With the exception of Early Head Start family child care, Head Start and ECAP center-based programs which are publicly funded and free for income eligible families*

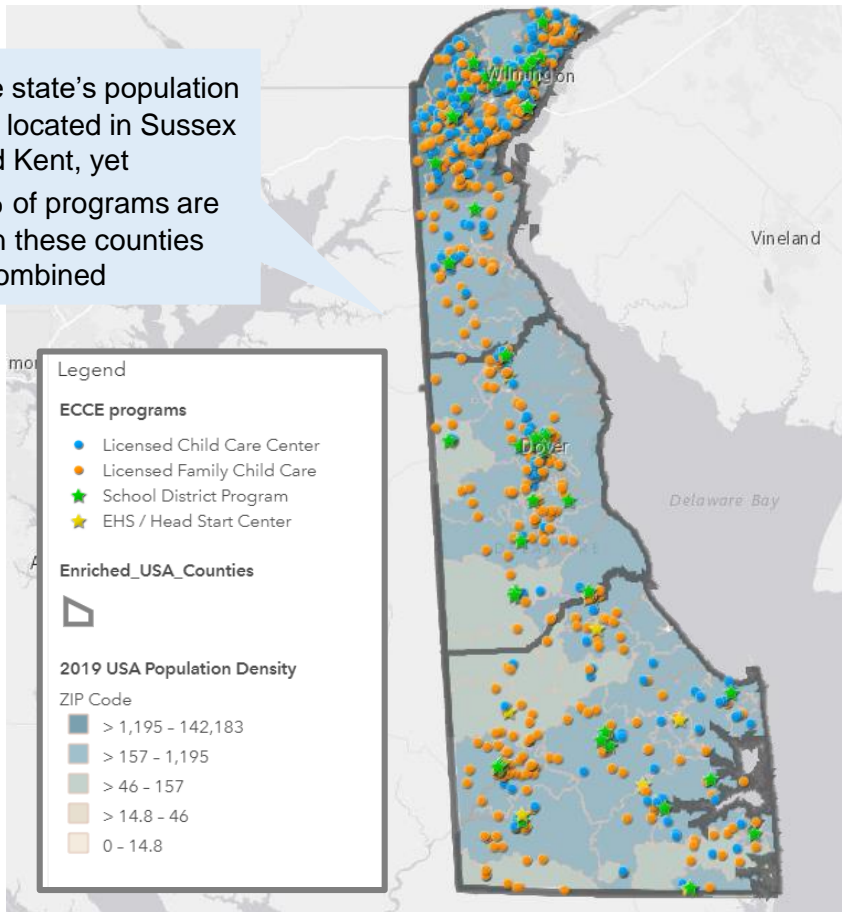


# Overview of Landscape

## Map of Delaware's ECCE programs

Map of Delaware ECCE programs

**47%** of the state's population under 5 are located in Sussex and Kent, yet only **38%** of programs are located in these counties combined



|            | County-wide home visiting programs  |
|------------|---|
| New Castle | EHS (New Directions Early Head Start – University of Delaware), EHS (New Castle County Head Start), PAT (Christina School District), HFA, NFP |
| Kent       | EHS (New Directions Early Head Start – DECC), PAT (Poly Tech Sussex County), PAT (DECC Kent County), HFA, NFP                                 |
| Sussex     | EHS (Telamon Corporation), PAT (DECC Sussex County), HFA, NFP   |

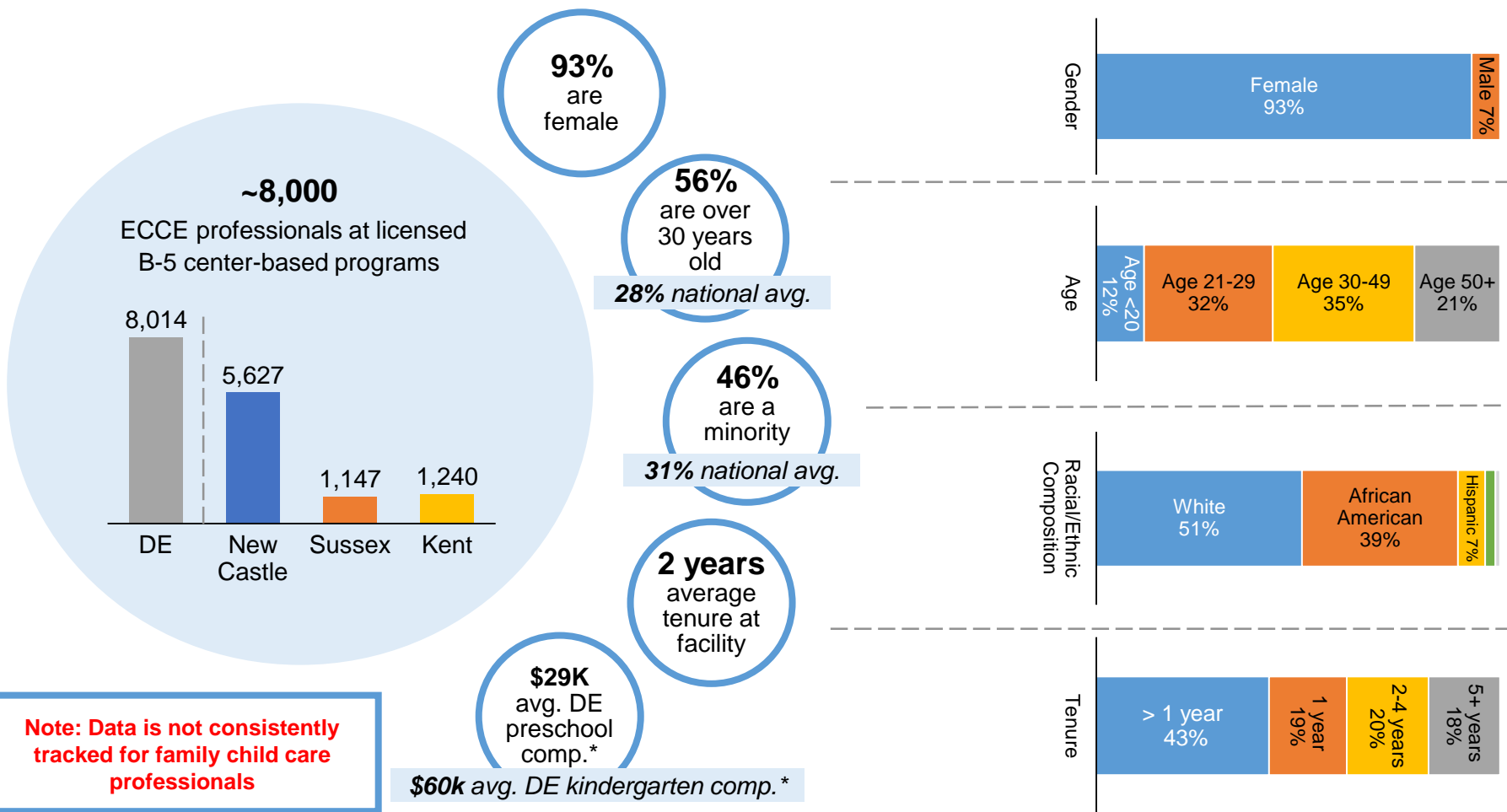
Program locations generally align with population density; as a result, **families located in rural areas may have to travel further to access programs/services**



# Overview of Landscape

Delaware's B-5 ECCE workforce is large and somewhat new to their positions; from a demographic perspective, DE center-based professionals are older and more diverse than national averages

## Summary Statistics of B-5 ECCE Professionals [Center-based Care]



\*includes preschool and kindergarten teachers in both public and private settings  
Source: Focus database (2019), NAEYC P2P Report (2016), Delaware Department of Labor

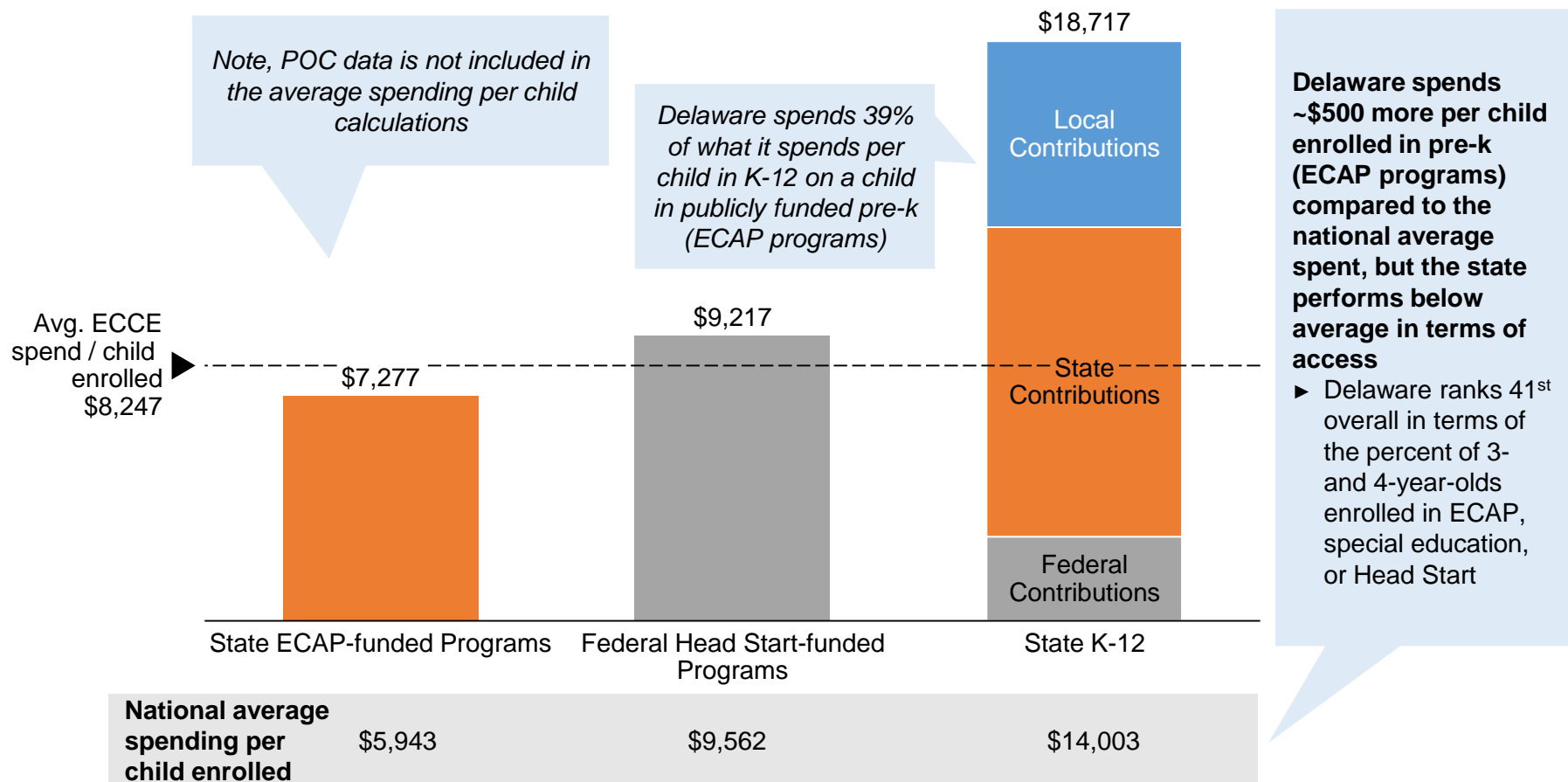




# Overview of Landscape

While Delaware spends more per student in pre-k than the national average, it spends a fraction of its per child spend in K-12 on this population and nationally ranks 41<sup>st</sup> in terms of access

## Delaware Education Spend per Child Enrolled, 2017-2018



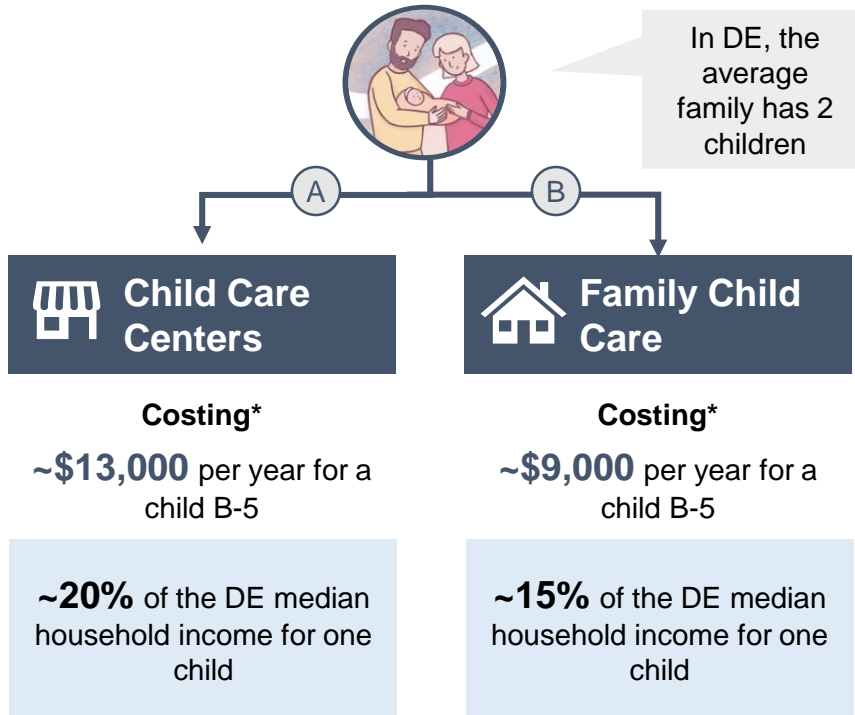




# Overview of Landscape

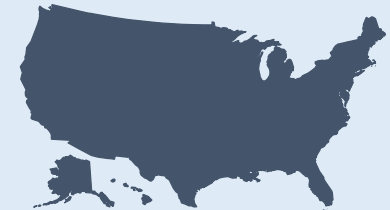
Private ECCE in Delaware is expensive, and market rates can be higher than the cost of in-state college tuition

A typical family, not eligible for public programs, has two options for formal ECCE....



\*Costs represent the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of 2018 market rates. The 75<sup>th</sup> percentile is used as the benchmark for POC reimbursement to provide equal access, and therefore consistently analyzed across materials

For Comparison....



The US national average for cost of B-5 child care is **\$10,408** for centers and **\$8,889** for family child care



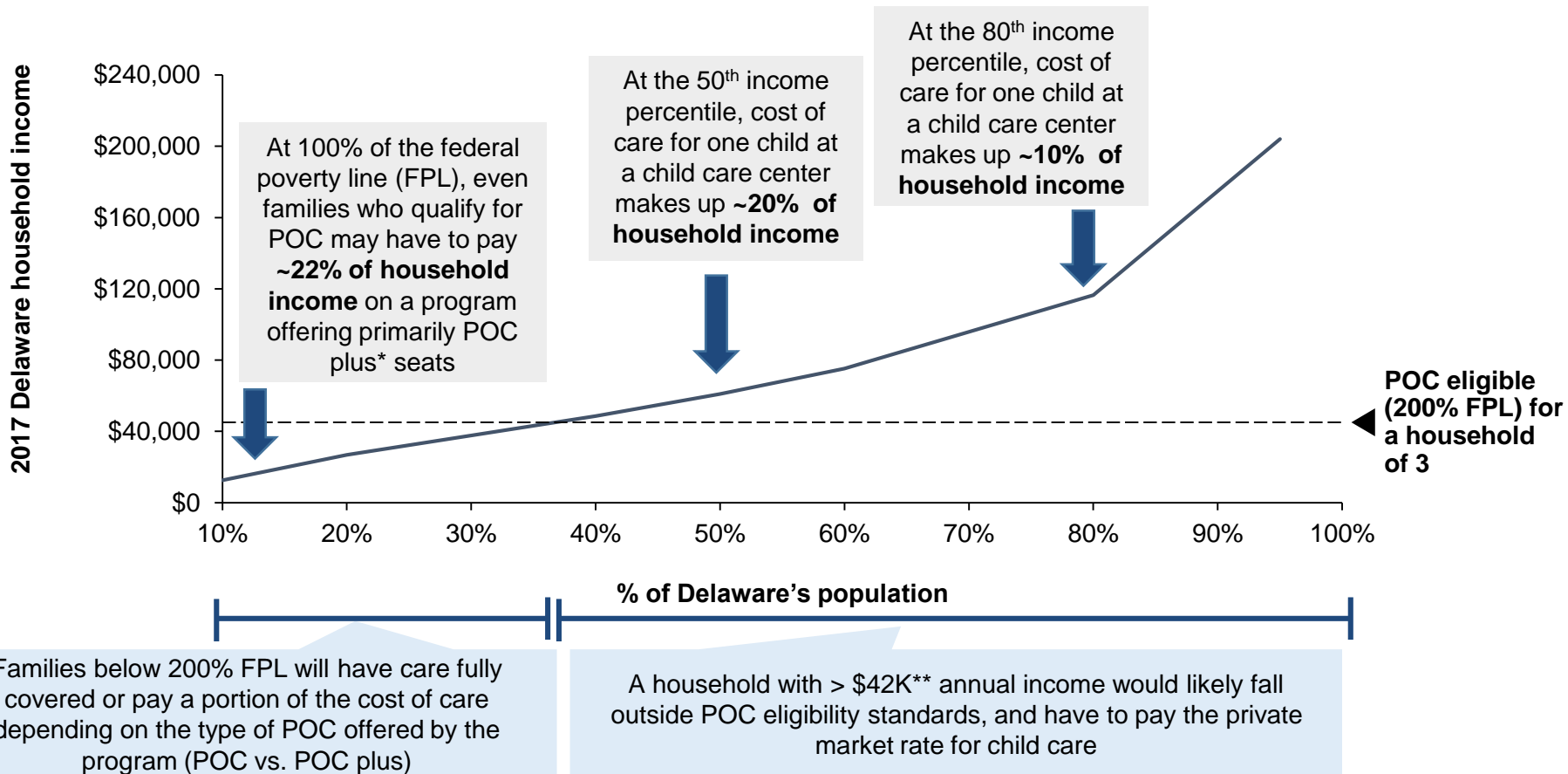
| Delaware Higher Education            | In-state Tuition |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Delaware Technical Community College | \$4,904          |
| Delaware State University            | \$7,868          |
| Wilmington University                | \$11,210         |
| University of Delaware               | \$13,680         |



# Overview of Landscape

The high cost of care is felt across income levels, representing a significant portion of household income for both the middle class and families who qualify for subsidies but forced to pay for POC +

**Delaware household distribution by household income compared to the cost of care and the POC eligibility cutoff**



\*The POC Plus rate was calculated as the difference between the POC reimbursement rate and the 2018 market rate of care (65% the 2018 market rate)

\*\*A household income of \$42K represents 200% of the Federal Poverty Level cutoff for a household of 3 persons, however eligibility standards change by the size of household

Source: 2018 Market Rate Study, IPUMS Data, US Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey, DHSS website

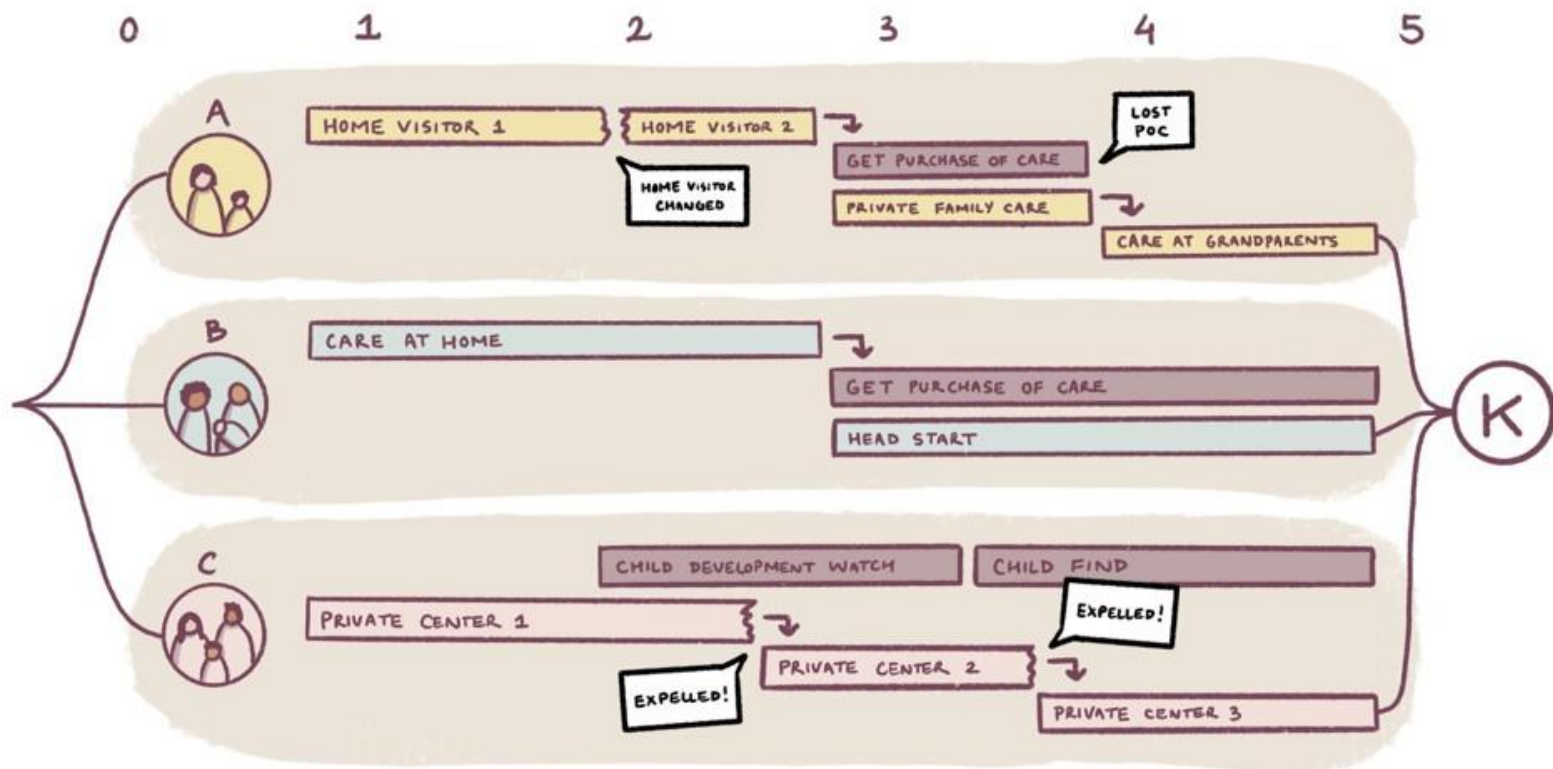
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# Overview of Landscape

While the landscape overview can suggest a more seamless system, families' experiences may be more varied

Families can find their way to early childhood care and education through **several routes** – they may also experience **various moments of adversity** and multiple settings of care throughout their journey



# Agenda

- ▶ Overview of Landscape
- ▶ **Opportunities for Delaware's ECCE System**
- ▶ Vision for Strategic Plan



## Opportunities: Bright Spots

There are “bright spots” in the current ECCE system based on family and stakeholder experiences

### Governance

- ▶ Positive momentum towards **streamlining governance**, as evidenced by the initial move of OCCL to DOE in July 2020
- ▶ Strong **relationships among individual program administrators**; this alignment supports the **best outcomes** for children and families across departments

*“The move from OCCL to DOE is critical in helping make the system work for programs & services and overcoming the complex system of regulations that exist today”*  
– Internal Stakeholder

### Resources

- ▶ Praise for [www.mychildde.org](http://www.mychildde.org), **My Child DE**, with interviewees noting it as providing a wealth of information that is easy to search for families

*“The information for families was so messy in the past – the coordinated effort for My Child DE is a huge step forward”* – Internal Stakeholder

### Programs/ Services

- ▶ Very few children waitlisted for existing services of those families who have navigated the signup process
- ▶ High satisfaction with services provided by **Child Development Watch family service coordinators** and **home visiting programs**
- ▶ Positive perceptions of the **strong connections between educators/professionals and children**

*“I thought it was really helpful and we absolutely loved our home visitor. My son really connected with her. She actually ended up retiring, so we were really upset when she retired”*  
– Parent, Kent

While, these **bright spots** are a **starting point** for the strategic plan to build upon, deeply **understanding family needs** will be critical to developing any early childhood system that is truly user-focused



## Opportunities: Map

The needs assessment identified opportunity areas to achieve Delaware's PDG B-5 aspiration

Delaware commits to **all children and families** having access to an **integrated early childhood system**, from birth through third grade, which provides **high-quality services** and an environment that supports their growth, development, and learning, and prepares them for **success in school and life**

*To do so, Delaware must help families with...*

**Availability of  
programs/services**

**Quality of  
programs/services**

**Affordability of  
programs/services**

**Identifying and  
navigating  
programs/services**

*These opportunities are supported by cross – cutting enabling conditions*

**High-quality, stable educator workforce**

**Data to understand child/family needs**

**Unified governance for consistent program and service delivery**



# Opportunities

The “Experiences that Matter” from the User Experience assessment map to these opportunities and enablers



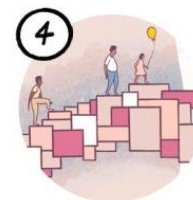
1  
Becoming  
your child's  
first teacher



2  
Finding  
care that  
works



3  
Coping  
with  
adversity



4  
Transitioning  
to a new  
setting

| Opportunities  |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Availability of programs/services                              | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 2 Quality of programs/services                                   |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |
| 3 Affordability of programs/services                             |   | ✓ | ✓ |   |
| 4 Identifying and navigating programs/services                   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Enabling conditions  |   |   |   |   |
| 5 High-quality, stable educator workforce                        | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   |
| 6 Data to inform child/family needs                              | ✓ |   | ✓ | ✓ |
| 7 Unified governance for consistent program and service delivery |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |





# 1. Availability of programs/services

## Summary of key strategic issues and insights



*The lack of availability of early childhood care and education that meets family needs is a pervasive challenge*

### Strategic issues

Family Pain Points

**ECCE hours of service do not reflect family needs**

System Conditions

**There is insufficient supply of ECCE programs by location and age groups served**

As a result of these availability (along with other) challenges, parents may opt for informal alternatives outside of ECCE

### Key data and insights to remember

**3%**

of child care centers offer **extended hours of care**, but represent 86% of the state's licensed program seats

*“In my area there is never enough space for a child...I actually take care of my grandkids so my daughter can work...they are too expensive for a single mother, and you also have to wait too long to get into a center”*

**47%** of the state's population under 5 are located in Sussex and Kent, yet only **38%** of programs are located in these counties

**77%**

of programs accept infants under 1 year



# 1. Availability of programs/services: Issue # 1

## ECCE hours of service do not reflect family needs

### Insights

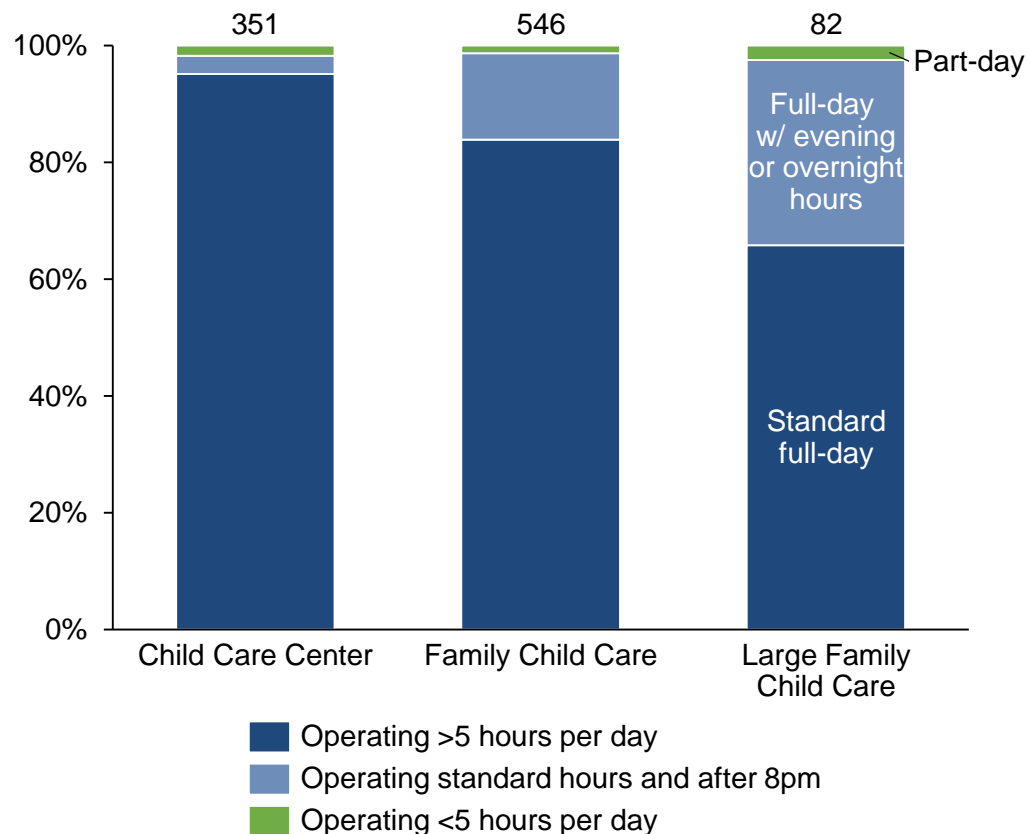
- ▶ Working families do not always have standard hours and **may struggle to find an ECCE program that fits their unpredictable or non-traditional schedule**
- ▶ Child care centers offer 86% of the state's licensed program seats, but **only 3% of center-based programs are offering extended hours of care (evening or overnight)**
- ▶ 14% of family child care and 31% of large family child care facilities offer these extended schedules for working families

*"Dropping off and picking up my son is hard. My job is so unpredictable, I never know what time I'll get off. I couldn't do it without my mom."*  
– Parent, Sussex

*"I work two jobs: one from 9pm to 6 am and the other from 10am to 2:30pm. I need a place that can be flexible with me."*  
– Parent, Kent

### Supporting Data and Perspectives

Licensed programs operating schedules by setting





# 1. Availability of programs/services: Issue # 2

There is insufficient supply of ECCE programs by location and age groups served

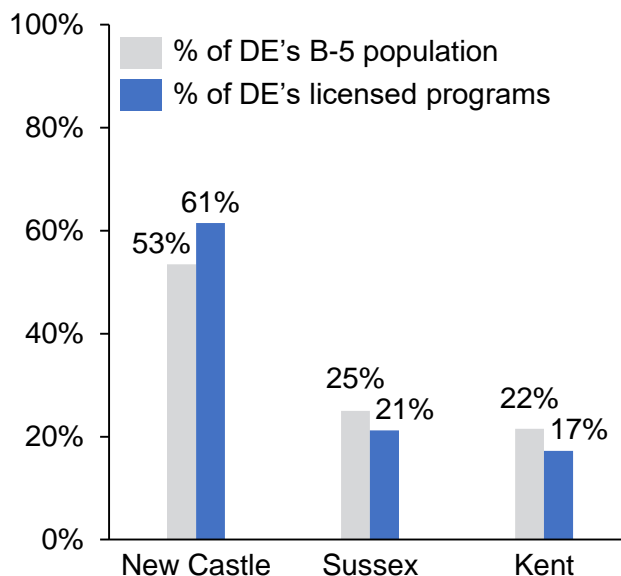
## Insights

- There is a dearth of programs in **Sussex and Kent**, where there are 38% of programs but 47% of the state's population under 5
- There is a gap in the number of programs serving Delaware's youngest – **across the state, 77% of programs accept infants under 1 year**, with the gap being most drastic in Sussex county where only 69% of programs serve this age group
  - Of Delaware's ~41K total licensed ECE program seats, only ~17K seats are allocated to Delaware's youngest, ages B-3

***"I'd love to see more options for families, For example, I had to drive my son 35 minutes away in order to enroll him in a quality program since there were none in the Dover area"***  
– Parent, Kent

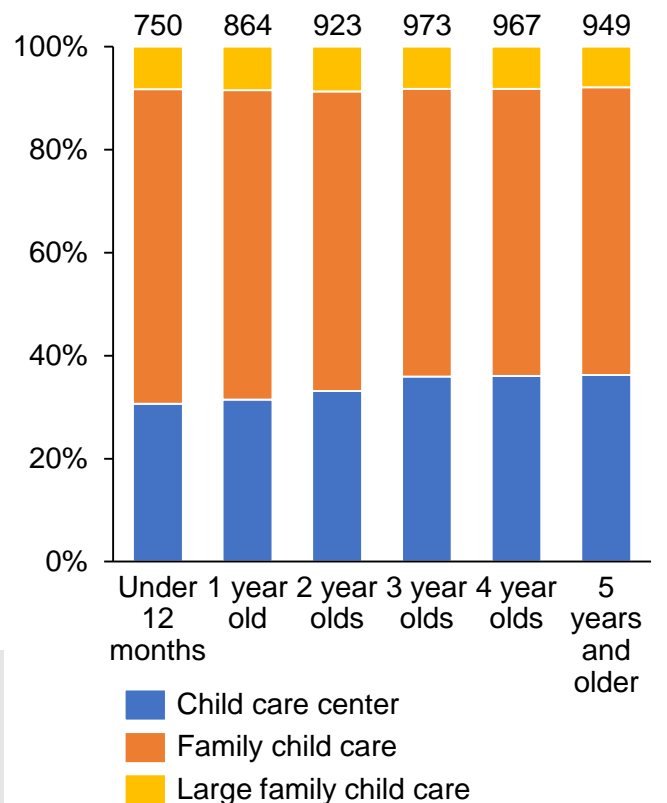
## Supporting Data and Perspectives

**Concentration of DE's population under 5 compared to the concentration of programs by county**



|                |     |     |     |
|----------------|-----|-----|-----|
| Total B-5 pop. | 35K | 17K | 14K |
| Total programs | 602 | 208 | 169 |

**Count of licensed programs in DE serving each age group by setting**





## 2. Quality of programs/services

### Summary of key strategic issues and insights



*Current quality measures face challenges due to families' limited knowledge of Delaware Stars, low participation by programs, and mixed outcomes from Star-rated programs*

#### Strategic issues

##### Family Pain Points

**Lack of awareness of Delaware Stars by families**

##### System Conditions

**Mixed participation in Delaware Stars across program settings**

**Lack of correlation between Delaware Stars and outcome indicators of quality**

#### Key data and insights to remember

**~6%**

of parents indicated they most valued a program with a quality Stars rating when selecting an ECCE program

While children in programs with a 5 Star rating modestly outperformed children in programs with a 2 Star rating, **children in low-income families did not experience differential learning in higher-rated programs**

**17%** of family child care programs participate in Stars, whereas **69% and 41%** of child care and large family child care centers participate, respectively

*"Stars is voluntary, so many programs do not participate. There are many places that are not in Stars that run excellent programs..."*

Note: efforts to address these issues are already underway with a Stars quality rating and improvement system redesign



## 2. Quality of program/services: Issue # 1

### Lack of family awareness of Delaware Stars

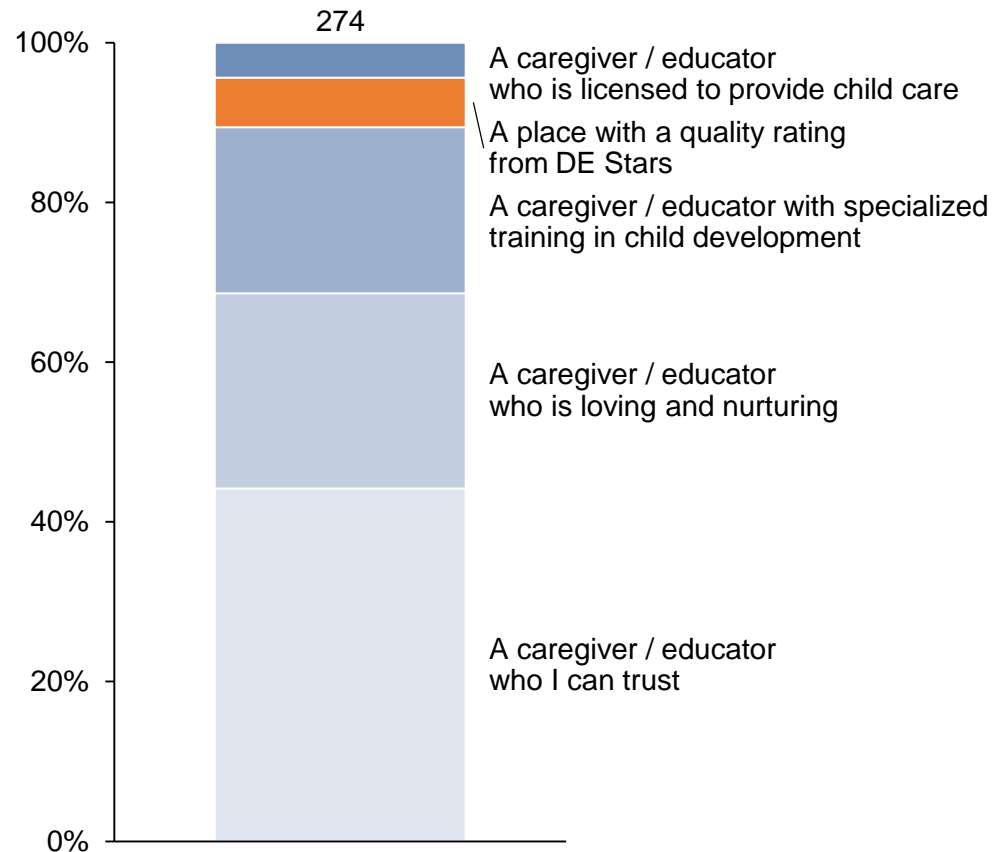
#### Insights

- ▶ **Stars participation was not a factor parents indicated was of value to them when seeking ECCE programs**
  - ▶ Only ~6% of parents indicated they most valued a place with a quality Stars rating the most when selecting an ECCE program
- ▶ **Family engagement was the lowest rated area of the quality rating and improvement system (QRIS).** This was attributed to lack of knowledge or a lack of understanding as to why Stars and QRIS in general is important

***"I think a giant missing piece of Stars is that we have not had any initiative focused on parents. Do you work with providers first, and get them excited to be in Stars, and then parents will see it as something to look for? Or do you educate families that this is what quality childcare looks like, and we have this great ratings system that's going to help you focus in on high quality?"*** – Internal Stakeholder Interview

#### Supporting Data and Perspectives

##### Factors Parents Value Most When Seeking ECCE





## 2. Quality of programs/services: Issue # 2

### Mixed participation in Delaware Stars across program settings

#### Insights

- Stars participation is limited across settings, especially at family care centers, which are often not participating or have a lower rating (1-3 stars)
  - Participation by large family child care programs and smaller family child care programs is less than 50%
  - New Castle has the highest percentage of highly rated stars programs in its program mix, with 63% of Stars rated programs in New Castle receiving 4 or 5 stars compared to 51% in Sussex and Kent
- One reason participation in Stars may be low is because of **discrepancies between Stars and other licensing requirements**

**“Discrepancies between Stars and licensing requirements sometimes make it impossible to comply, these layers of requirements do not talk to each other”**

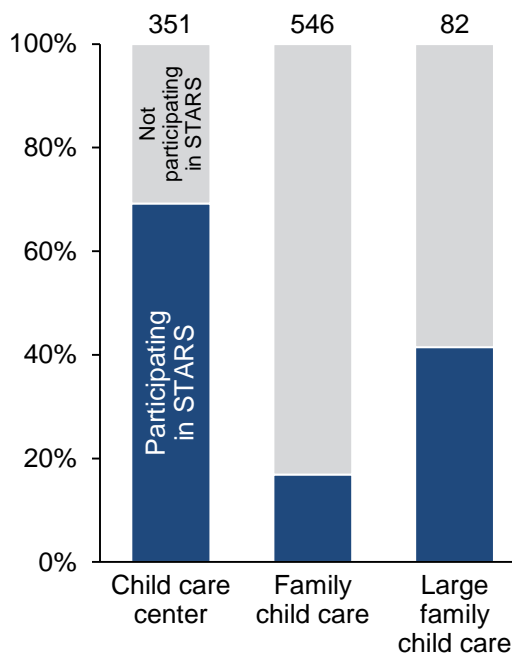
– Internal Stakeholder Interview

**“Stars is voluntary, so many programs do not participate. There are many places that are not in Stars that run excellent programs. One option is that any program that receives financing should be required to participate in Stars”**

– Internal Stakeholder Interview

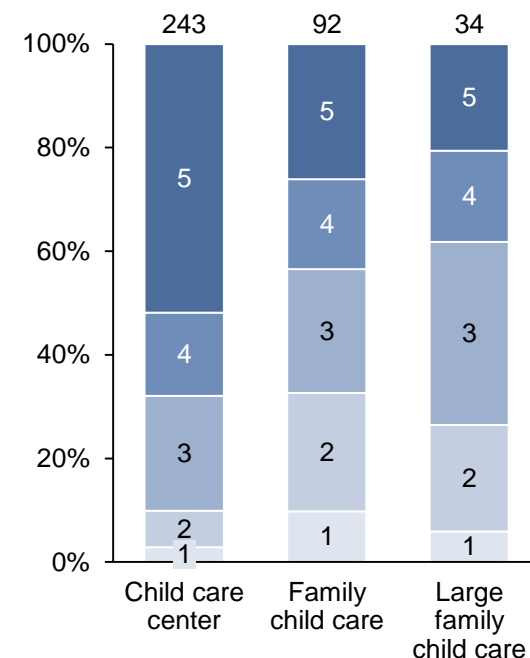
#### Supporting Data and Perspectives

Proportion of licensed programs participating in Stars by setting



|                          |     |     |     |
|--------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| Participation rate       | 69% | 17% | 41% |
| Total Stars participants | 243 | 92  | 34  |

Stars participant ratings by setting



|                         |     |     |     |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| Total 4/5 Star programs | 165 | 40  | 13  |
| % Star-rated 4 or 5     | 71% | 43% | 38% |



## 2. Quality of programs/services: Issue # 3

### Lack of correlation between Stars and outcome indicators of quality

#### Insights

- ▶ **Rand found no a statistical significance between other quality measures and Stars based on an assessment of 2014-2015 data**, however this is not necessarily uncommon in the field and Stars has undergone some changes since then
- ▶ **In Rand's report, improved childhood development outcomes were not necessarily realized at ECCE programs with better Stars ratings**
  - ▶ **This improvement is particularly lacking for children in low-income families** at higher-rated programs
- ▶ **Motivated programs face challenges in advancing in rating tiers which makes it difficult to improve overall system quality**

**Delaware Stars is currently undergoing a multi-phase revision, beginning with a review of existing standards by setting in light of current research, practice, and programs' experience to identify what standards should be kept or eliminated**

#### Supporting Data and Perspectives

##### Stars Performance Across Key Metrics

###### Star Ratings and Program Quality

- ▶ As Star rating levels increased from 3 to 5, average scores for alternative quality measures increased at a modest rate and generally not with statistically significant increases from level to level

###### Star Ratings and Childhood Development Outcomes

- ▶ Differences in children's development across rating tiers were generally small and statistically insignificant
- ▶ Children in programs with a 5 Star rating modestly outperformed children in programs with a 2 Star rating on executive function skills
- ▶ Children in low-income families did not experience differential learning in higher-rated programs compared to those in lower-rated programs

###### Stars System Performance

- ▶ Programs face challenges in advancing through the ratings tiers, but are typically motivated to improve quality





### 3. Affordability of programs/services

#### Summary of key strategic issues and insights



*Families struggle to afford the high cost of formal child care and education and lack access to financial assistance that meets their needs*

#### Strategic issues

##### Family Pain Points

**The cost of ECCE is high** and can make up a considerable portion of household income for families across income levels

**Access to adequate financial assistance is limited**, even for families that qualify for subsidies

##### System Conditions

Despite the 2019 reimbursement increase, **POC reimbursement rates have still not kept up with the cost of care** and are not enabling programs to offer more affordable options

#### Key data and insights to remember

**~20%**

of the median family income covers center-based child care for one child B-5

***“POC Only is at a crisis point...most programs are offering a majority of their slots as POC Plus, which families just cannot afford”***

**~24%**

of programs are not accepting any form of POC subsidy

***“That’s the reason she’s not in preschool. It’s \$700 a month. I’m applying for Purchase of Care but for as much as I have to pay, I might as well not work”***

At a POC plus program, **~35%** of program fees are not covered for POC eligible families

\*Reflects 2019 POC reimbursement rate increase

Source: 2018 Market Rate Study, 2019 Children and Families First Program Intake Survey, OCCL Program Data (2019), Census Bureau, IDEO User Experience Needs Assessment

#### Key Definitions

- ▶ **POC Only** – Program seat where full cost of care is covered for POC eligible families
- ▶ **POC Plus** – Program seat where POC eligible families pay the difference between the state reimbursement rate and the program’s market rate



### 3. Affordability of programs/services: Issue # 1

The cost of ECCE is high and can make up a considerable portion of household income for families across income levels

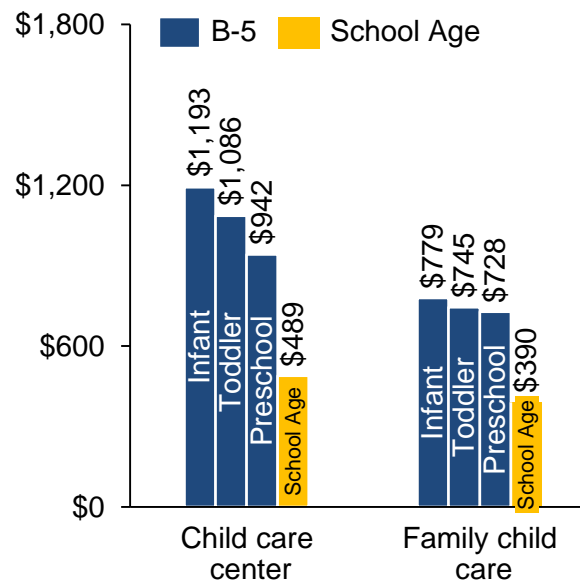
#### Insights

- ▶ **Child care can make up a significant portion of a families' household income for even one child, and many families have multiple**
  - ▶ A family just above the POC cut-off will spend about ~30% of income on ECCE for a single child; for comparison, families are advised to spend about the same proportion of their earnings on rent
- ▶ **Child care and education is most expensive at centers and for Delaware's youngest**
- ▶ **Family child care provides a slightly more affordable option for families, however, these settings are not available at scale and may have uncertain quality**, representing 15% of total seats and often not participating in Stars
- ▶ Because of the high cost of care, **many families are forced to look for alternative options** like staying at home or getting help from a family caregiver

***"That's the reason she's not in preschool. It's \$700 a month. I'm applying for Purchase of Care but for as much as I have to pay, I might as well not work"*** – Parent, New Castle

#### Supporting Data and Perspectives

2018 monthly market rate\* of care in DE at the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile by age group and setting



Proportion of DE household income covering the cost of B-5 care

|                                | Child care center | Family child care |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Median                         | ~20%              | ~15%              |
| 40 <sup>th</sup> ** percentile | ~30%              | 20%               |
| 80 <sup>th</sup> percentile    | ~10%              | ~8%               |

**The average family in DE has 2 children**, making total child care spend ~60% of income at the 40<sup>th</sup> income percentile (the approximate income cut-off for POC eligibility)

|                             |      |      |
|-----------------------------|------|------|
| % of licensed program seats | ~86% | ~14% |
| % in Stars                  | ~70% | ~20% |

\*Monthly market rates reflects conversation daily rates paid by private-paying families and assume an average of 22 workdays per month; The 2018 Market Rate Study report provides data only at a county level. In this analysis, state-wide rates were proxied from the MRS 2018 report using a weighted average for the count of facilities by county

\*\*The 40<sup>th</sup> percentile is approximately the cut-off where families begin to become eligible for POC (200% the federal poverty line)

Source: 2018 Market Rate Study, OCCL Program Data (2019), Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey, IDEO User Experience Needs Assessment



### 3. Affordability of programs/services: Issue # 2

Access to adequate financial assistance is limited, even for families that qualify for subsidies

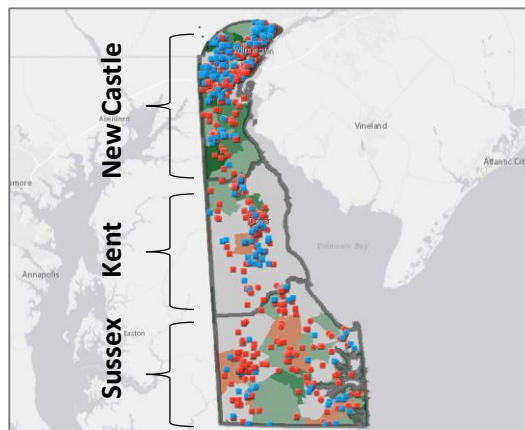
#### Insights

- ▶ **Access to affordable care is limited for families who qualify for POC** with ~24% of programs not accepting any form of the subsidy
- ▶ **Availability of fully subsidized care is even harder to come by with the pervasiveness of POC Plus**, a form of POC where families are responsible for the difference between the government reimbursement rate and the program's rate (35% of the 2018 market rate)
- ▶ **Available subsidies for families with the greatest economic needs are stratified geographically**, with the lowest proportion of programs accepting the subsidy in Kent, Delaware's county with the most low-income families

***"POC only is at a crisis point, with very few true POC slots available for families. You are seeing most programs offering 90% of their slots as POC Plus slots, which many families just cannot afford"*** – Internal Stakeholder Interview

#### Supporting Data and Perspectives

Map of licensed programs in DE accepting POC



##### Accepting POC

- Licensed Child Care Center
- Licensed Family Care Center / Large Family Care Center

##### Not accepting POC

- Licensed Child Care Center
- Licensed Family Care Center / Large Family Care Center

##### USA Poverty Ratio

- Greater than 14% living in poverty
- Between 8-14% living in poverty
- Between 8-4%
- Between 2-4% living in poverty
- Less than 2% living in poverty

Percent of licensed programs accepting POC by county

|            | Any form of POC | POC Only | POC Plus |
|------------|-----------------|----------|----------|
| New Castle | 75%             | 60%      | 22%      |
| Kent       | 74%             | 55%      | 33%      |
| Sussex     | 80%             | 66%      | 22%      |
| DE         | 75%             | 61%      | 24%      |

*Kent county has the greatest proportion of programs accepting POC plus, and the lowest proportion of programs accepting true POC*

Note: Because programs can accept multiple forms of POC, percentages will not total; Type of POC offered by program was taken from the Children and Families First Program intake survey and then applied to known overall POC acceptance rates from OCCL Program Data

Source: OCCL Program Data (2019), Children and Families First Program Intake Survey (2019), IDEO User Experience Needs Assessment



### 3. Affordability of programs/services: Issue # 3

Despite the 2019 reimbursement hike, POC reimbursement rates have still not kept up with the cost of care and are not enabling programs to offer more affordable options

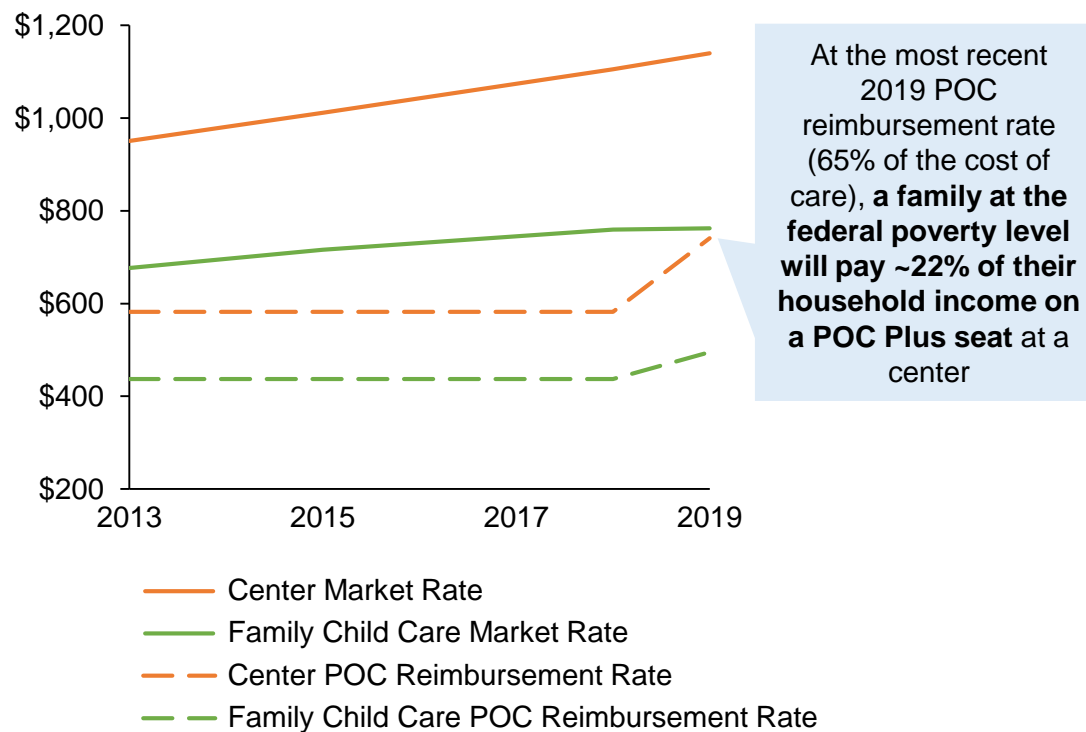
#### Insights

- ▶ Despite rises in the market rate for programs, POC reimbursements rates have remained flat for the last 6+ years; in 2019, POC rates still reflect only about ~65% of 2018 market rates
- ▶ Even the recent POC adjustment in the summer of 2019, reimbursement rates are still perceived to be short from the true cost of quality care
- ▶ Low POC reimbursement rates, disincentivize programs from offering fully subsidized seats (POC Only) or may force programs to raise prices for non-POC clients to makeup for their rising costs of care

***“In our Newark location, 50% of our slots are for POC. When you can only raise your rates for 50% of your clientele it becomes extremely difficult to sustain a business”*** – Program Administrator, Early Childhood Care and Education Program

#### Supporting Data and Perspectives

75<sup>th</sup> percentile of annual market rates for B-5 programs compared to historical POC reimbursement rates, 2013-2019





## 4. Identifying and navigating programs/services

### Summary of key strategic issues and insights



*Understanding early childhood care and education services, and then navigating access to and participation in these services, is often difficult for families*

#### Strategic issues

##### Family Pain Points

**A system that is often confusing and cumbersome for parents and families**

**Perceived lack of support and coordination for children with special needs**

**Gap in culturally responsive supports for dual language learners**

**Lack of a holistic understanding of parental and familial needs**

##### System Conditions

**Underutilization of high-quality services and information resources**

#### Key data and insights to remember

*"I had to be very proactive... This program is supposed to help parents get through this and help kids... I had to take the transition to the school system into my own hands"*

**13-20%**

of programs by county employ staff who speak Spanish

**~80%**

of available home visiting seats are filled

*"We have a wait list... There's nothing more frustrating to have a family come in, and tell them their child has a speech delay, but... you'll have to wait 6-8 weeks"*

*"They send you to different places too much. I'm in a domestic violence situation and I need emergency housing and child care. I don't have time to wait"*



## 4. Identifying and navigating programs/services: Issue # 1

### A system that is often confusing and cumbersome for parents and families

#### Insights

- ▶ A **lack of common language across multiple sources of resource information** leads to confusion among families and program professionals

- ▶ **No centralized referral contact is universally leveraged:**

***"The hub. That's an idea that I hear all the time from parents. Trying to navigate all of the different services that a lot of them need and having to go to different places, fill out different forms that sometimes are redundant. It's overwhelming"*** – Early Childhood Professional, New Castle

- ▶ When families do identify available resources, they often face **long wait times when trying to access these resources**, such as a nearby program or special needs services

***"We have a wait list... There's nothing more frustrating to have a family come in, and tell them their child has a speech delay, but...you'll have to wait 6-8 weeks"*** – Early Childhood Professional, Sussex & Kent

- ▶ As a child ages through the ECCE system, families continue to face systemic **challenges that may threaten a disruption of services**

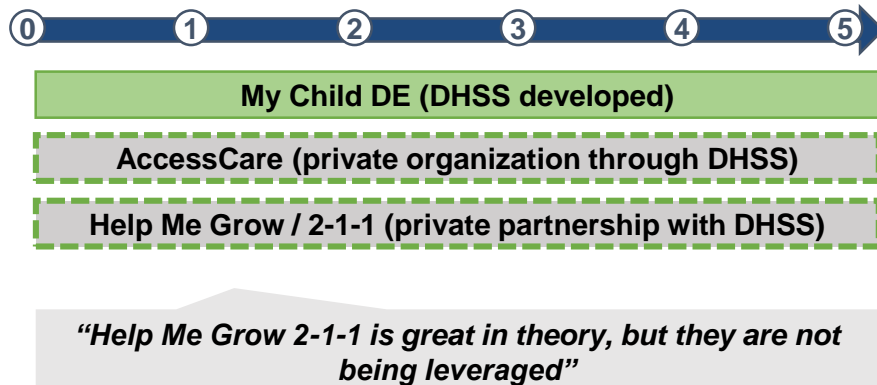
***"She went to Nurses 'n Kids for about a year and then we found out that the insurance declined her... So we went back through the Medicaid process. They declined... So we had to quickly find someplace else"*** – Parent

#### Supporting Data and Perspectives

Delaware's resource and referral system is **decentralized across three sources**, making it difficult to offer a seamless system of referrals and outreach to families

- ▶ For example, **within My Child DE, users need to choose to search either OCCL or CFF data**, rather than having one search system with integrated data sets from these sources

#### ECCE Resources and Referral Services Across Ages



#### Legend: Department Ownership

DOE

KIDS

DHSS

Private Organization





## 4. Identifying and navigating programs/services: Issue # 2

### Perceived lack of support and coordination for children with special needs

#### Insights

- ▶ When a child does not qualify for Child Development Watch services, but still has needs, **parents can feel isolated or at a loss**

***"If I have a specific diagnosis, I know how to aid my child. But to have a diagnosis that you don't know jack about, when they give you a little pamphlet, it's kind of hard"*** – Parent, Sussex

- ▶ For students eligible for services, when transitioning from Part C to Part B, **inexperienced coordinators having difficulty distilling the complexities of IDEA law to families and high staff turnover** can leave families without the support they need

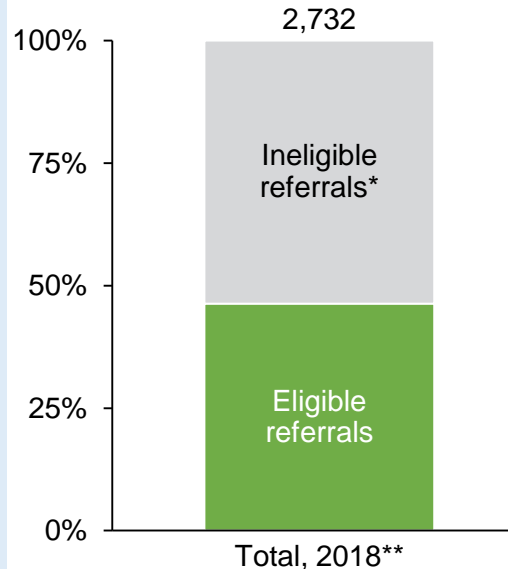
***"I had to be very proactive...This program is supposed to help parents get through this and help kids...I had to take the transition to the school system into my own hands"*** – Parent

- ▶ When it comes to service delivery, **itinerant services minimize disruption to a child's day** by allowing him/her to receive services in their school, though **only ~60% of districts offer these services**

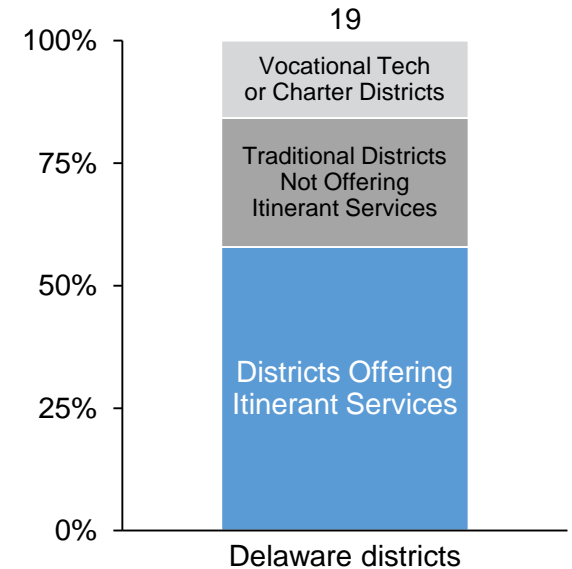
- ▶ These services were stopped several years ago and only just started back again ~2 years ago

#### Supporting Data and Perspectives

**Percentage of referrals to Child Development Watch that were ineligible**



**Districts providing itinerant services**



#### Protocol for Transitioning from Part C to Part B

- While some states automate notifications to integrate Part C and B data systems nightly, **Delaware follows a manual process that occurs monthly**
- ▶ Part C data is extracted from a spreadsheet and sent to field agents that sort it
  - ▶ A data manager determines compliance / noncompliance and instructions are sent to districts about how to input data to indicate compliance and reasons for non-compliance

\*Note: the 53% of referrals that were deemed ineligible were due to true ineligibility (via MDA), referrals losing contact, declining, and/or not consenting

\*\*Note: as of August 16, 2019, 1,413 children are actively receiving services under Part C and 69 children's parents have given consent for their child to be tested, but eligibility has not yet been determined

Source: Child Development Watch, Internal Stakeholder Interviews, IDEO User Experience Needs Assessment





## 4. Identifying and Navigating Systems: Issue # 3

### Gap in culturally responsive supports for dual language learners

#### Insights

- Dual language learners' experiences in ECCE are often impacted by their teachers and their ability to communicate with them, yet the **proportion of programs with staff who speak dual language learners' most common language, Spanish, ranges from 6-41% by setting and 13-20% by county**

*"The daycare was not able to understand my son because they did not place him with a teacher who speaks Spanish. I made a complaint with the person in charge, but she didn't do anything"* – Parent, New Castle

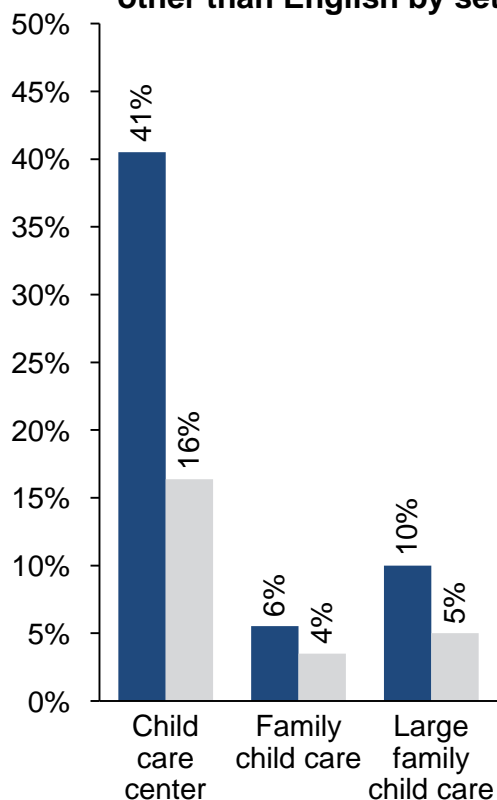
*"For my son at the other childcare center, they only spoke English. He felt lost. When we moved him he felt more included"* – Parent

- Dual language learners may be less likely to enter kindergarten with language, cognitive, and social emotional skills needed for success

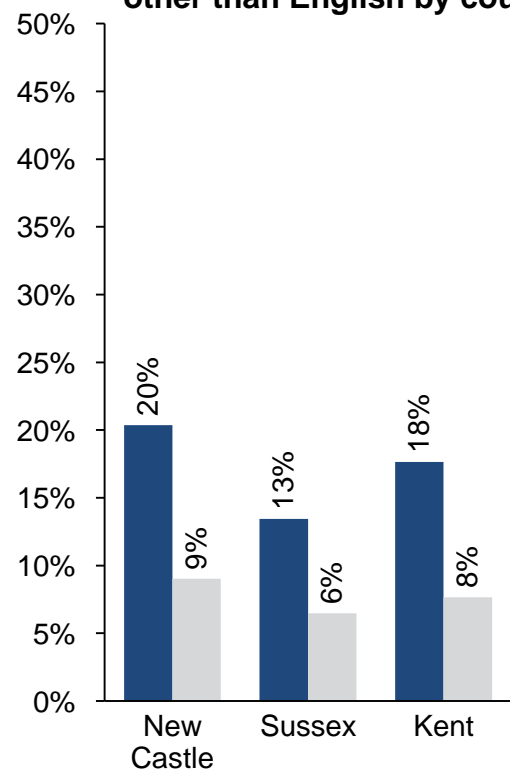
*"After 3 weeks of being in kindergarten in Puerto Rico, the hurricane hit. So (my kid) never went back. When we got to Delaware, he started kindergarten again and he was really behind"* – Parent, New Castle

#### Supporting Data and Perspectives

**Proportion of programs with staff who speak a language other than English by setting**



**Proportion of programs with staff who speak a language other than English by county**



Spanish  
Other\* language (non-English)



## 4. Identifying and Navigating Systems: Issue # 4

### Lack of a holistic understanding of parental and familial needs

#### Insights

- ▶ **Parents are their child's first teacher, yet many may not feel adequately prepared** – parents need support with a range of challenges that can not always be addressed in ECCE programs, like sleep, nutrition, behavior, and health
- ▶ **Families in need of ECCE services have mixed knowledge of the resources available to them** and the supports they need; programs do not always meet families where they are in their ECCE journey
- ▶ **Negative experiences with ECCE programs and services can result in parents feeling ashamed**, and potentially deciding not to pursue services for their children

#### Why does this matter?

- ▶ Poor experiences can lead to **fewer families applying for or continuing programs and services**
- ▶ Programs and services that do not meet families' needs or understand their contexts are **limited in the positive impact they can have**

#### Supporting Data and Perspectives

*"A provider who is attentive to both the child and the parent's needs makes everything easier" – Parent, New Castle*

*"I was in a car accident in January, so now I have to ask people for a ride. Would be nice to have to go to only one place instead of a bunch of places for my son" – Parent*

*"They send you to different places too much. I'm in a domestic violence situation and I need emergency housing and child care. I don't have time to wait" – Parent, Kent*

*"There was a point in time where I would be freaking out going, 'Is someone going to call the Kids Department on me? Is someone going to make a phone call?' Because they don't know the history and they don't know his issues" – Parent, New Castle*

*"Just to be around other moms and hear their breastfeeding stories...hearing that other people struggle somewhat, too, makes me feel not so bad and a little bit more normal that I'm struggling as well" – Parent, Kent*



## 4. Identifying and Navigating Systems: Issue # 5

### Underutilization of high-quality services and formal resources

#### Insights

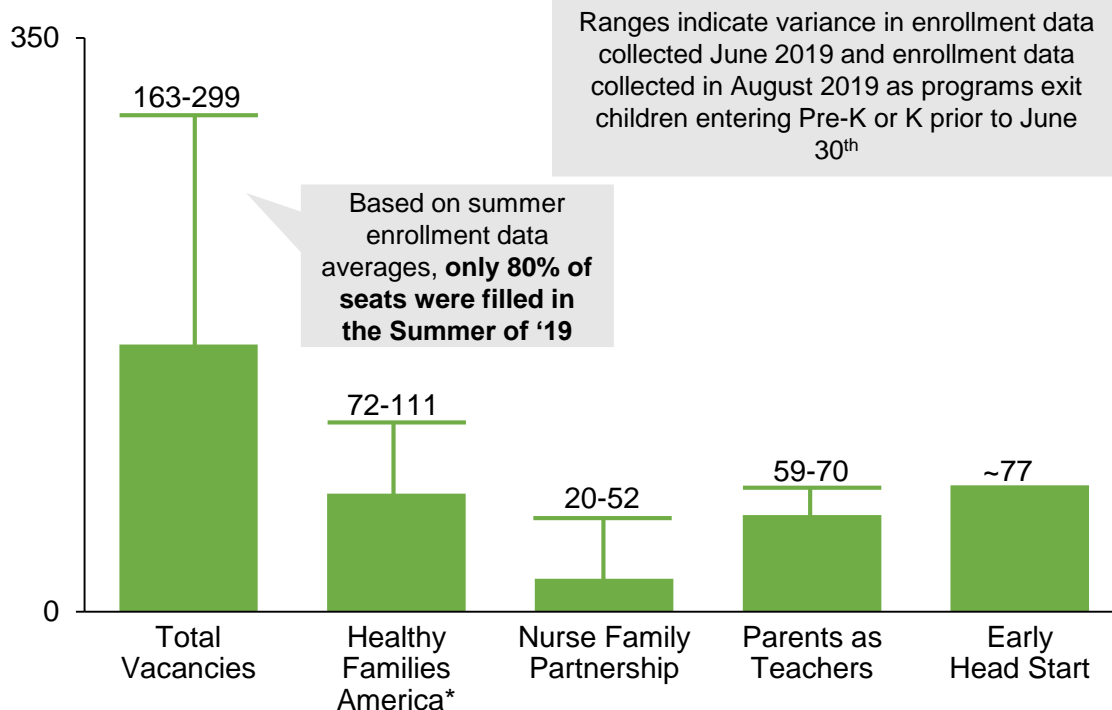
- ▶ **Home visiting programs are underutilized today, with only ~80% of seats filled**, yet referral services indicated that home visits represent the largest volume of in-bound requests, with **over 500 calls requesting support last year**
  - ▶ This suggests access to home visiting is limited by external barriers rather than widespread lack of awareness
- ▶ As parents work to navigate the ECCE space, they may **rely on their personal social networks for information** because of the lack of perceived helpfulness of formal information sources

***"I always ask friends and family for advice, My daughter's friend's mom was lived in Delaware for 20 years, So I ask her for advice, what's the best place to take them to play?"***  
– Parent, New Castle

***"I actually find more information in the Facebook group than the DHSS workshops. Because I think in person people get off topic and waste time"***  
– Parent, New Castle

#### Supporting Data and Perspectives

**Vacant seats by home visiting program, (Summer 2019)**





## 5. High Quality, Stable Workforce

### Summary of key strategic issues and insights



*Delaware's ECCE programs struggle to attract and maintain a highly quality workforce*

#### Strategic issues

##### Provider Pain Points

**Professional development programming is not accessible or considered particularly valuable** to educators

**Programs struggle to retain their workforce** despite educators wanting to make ECCE their long-term career

##### System Conditions

**Lack of qualified ECCE workforce supply**

**Poor compensation** does not incentivize quality applicants, or retention / professional development within the current workforce

#### Key data and insights to remember

**2 years**  
average tenure of ECCE professionals at a given facility

***"To have more highly qualified and trained teachers that costs you money, either in literal training dollars or because now you're hiring somebody who's got more skills and they don't want to make \$9.50 an hour"***

***"..it almost feels like everyone who comes in here for an interview, we have to hire them because we don't have any other options"***

**Only 1 in 5**  
professionals at Star-rated programs have a bachelor degree (w/ ECE credits)

Only **14%**  
of trainings are located on-site at programs

***The trainings most frequently offered have the least perceived benefit for participants***





## 5. High Quality, Stable Workforce: Issue # 1

Professional development programming is not accessible or considered particularly helpful to ECCE professionals

### Insights

- ▶ While trainings are being offered across counties, **training times and locations are often not convenient for many ECCE professionals** who work long days and have limited time to commute on their evenings and / or on the weekends
- ▶ Furthermore, there appears to be a **discrepancy between the content offered and what is perceived to be most beneficial to educators**
  - ▶ The trainings most frequently offered, Observation / Assessment and Environment / Curriculum, have the least perceived benefit for participants
- ▶ **Educators expect to benefit most from social emotional development and behavior related trainings**, a need echoed by families who worry about professionals' capacity to deal with the stresses of trauma, developmental and / or behavioral issues faced by their children

***"It's good when you know who your child is going to be serviced by since every teacher does not have the training to deal with all types of children"***– Parent, Sussex

### Supporting Data and Perspectives

#### DIEEC PD Quarterly Satisfaction Survey (July – Sept. 2019)



**32**

total trainings occurred from July – Sept 2019



**608**

Attendees at trainings from July –Sept 2019



**28%**

of publically offered trainings were cancelled (47 total trainings offered)



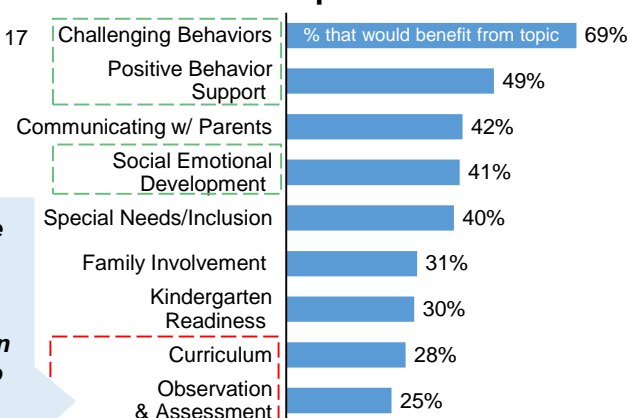
Only **14%** of trainings occurred on-site at programs

#### Trainings offered by content area



***"We have done so many trainings on ASQ's with no new information that it's hard to stay focused"***  
– Open-ended Survey Response

#### % of respondents reporting they would benefit from trainings in the topic





## 5. High Quality, Stable Workforce: Issue # 2

Programs struggle to retain their workforce despite educators wanting to make ECCE their long-term career

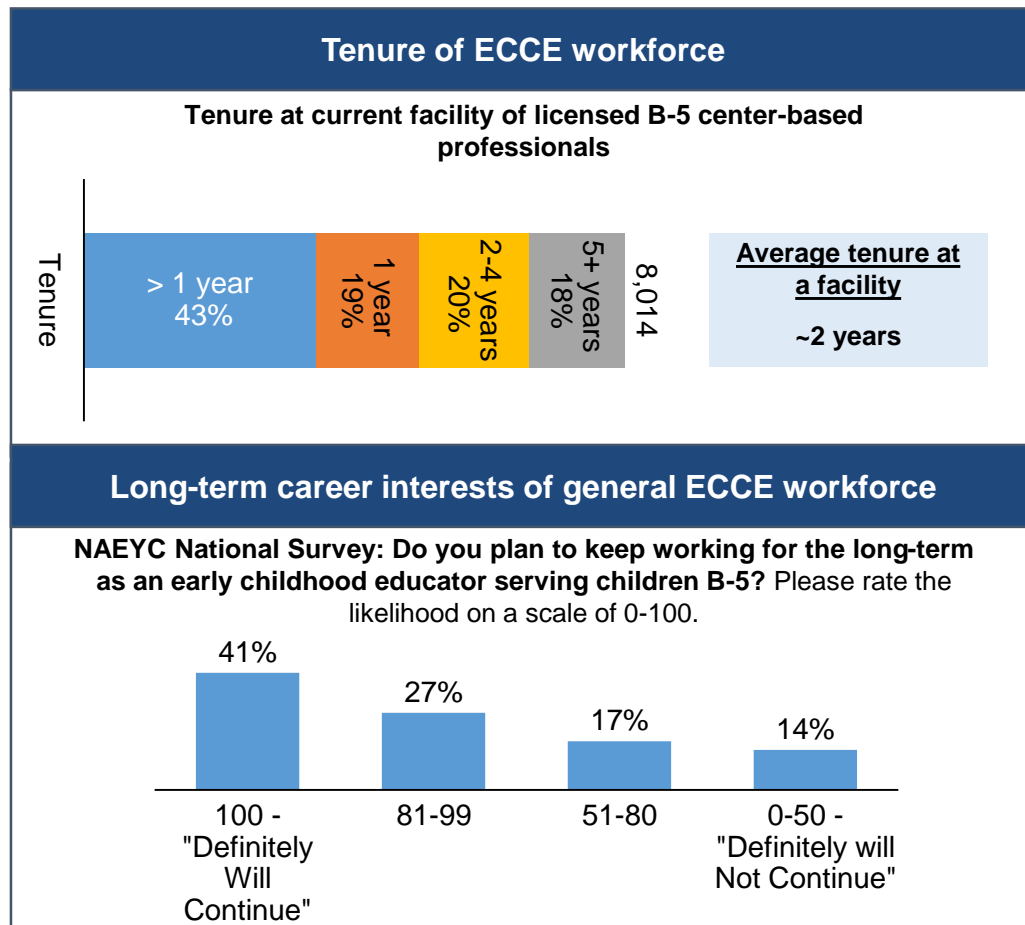
### Insights

- In Delaware, **retention rates at individual programs are low**, resulting in an overall ECCE workforce that is relatively new to their current roles
- **Retention issues are difficult** at the program level, but are also **internalized by families and children who often become attached to their caregivers**
- While programs struggle to maintain their professionals for over 2 years (the average tenure at a given facility), **national surveys indicate that the majority of educators want to make ECCE their long-term career**

***"If her teacher doesn't come back this year, I don't know how my daughter is going to react"*** – Parent, Sussex

***"There is clearly a workforce crisis, not just in finding qualified workers, but then retaining them"***  
– Internal stakeholder interview

### Supporting Data and Perspectives







## 5. High Quality, Stable Workforce: Issue # 3

### Lack of qualified ECCE workforce supply

#### Insights

- ▶ Programs **struggle with the overall lack of supply of workers** in their market, and will often compromise on qualifications to keep their programs sufficiently staffed
- ▶ **The pipeline of students specializing in ECCE from DE's higher education institutions is limited and has been declining over the last 3 years**, with less than 100 students graduating with any form of a degree in ECCE in 2018
- ▶ There is also indication that **misalignment between state policy and higher education practices** have placed barriers on the institutions' ability to place qualified students in the field
  - ▶ For example: Recent fingerprinting and background check restrictions were implemented without deep coordination with higher education programs, limiting the number of students that can be placed at centers during their education

***"We are in the process still of hiring people. It's hard to find qualified people. It almost feels like everyone who comes in here for an interview, we have to hire them because we don't have any other options"***– Early Learning Professional, New Castle

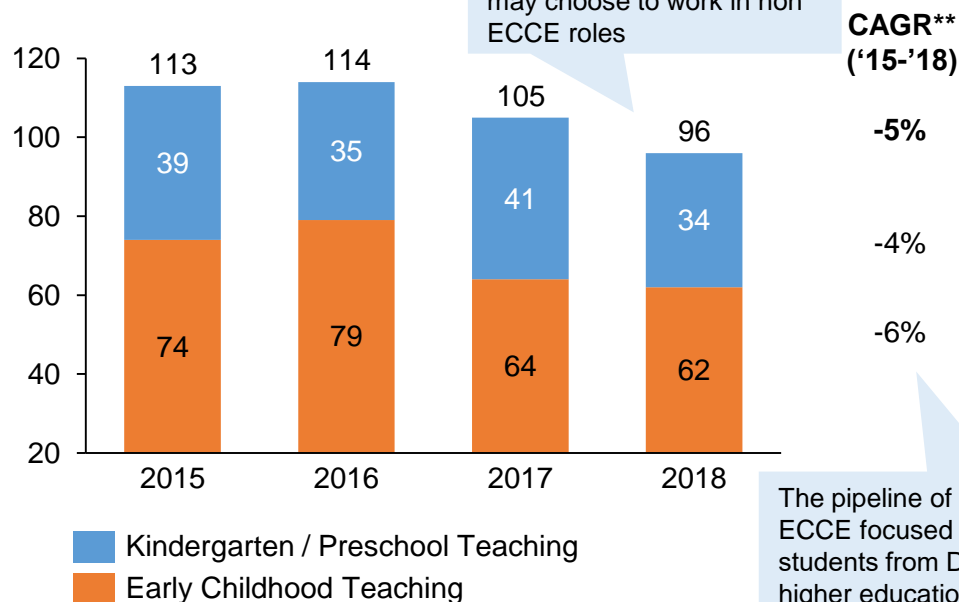
#### Supporting Data and Perspectives

##### Total ECCE degree completions at DE's higher education institutions\*

2015-2018

Includes students completing certificates, diplomas, and associate's and bachelor's degrees

~30% of the pipeline of ECCE graduates is focused on Kindergarten / Preschool programming, so graduates may choose to work in non ECCE roles



The pipeline of ECCE focused students from DE's higher education institutions has been declining over the last 3 years

\*Institutions with completions in ECCE fields include Delaware State University, DTCC, University of Delaware and Wilmington University

\*\*CAGR stands for compound annual growth rate

Source: Delaware Stars Database, Internal Stakeholder Interviews, IPEDS Data, IDEO User Experience Needs Assessment





## 5. High Quality, Stable Workforce: Issue # 4

Poor compensation does not incentivize quality applicants, or retention / professional development within the current workforce

### Insights

- ▶ In DE, poor compensation of ECCE workforce takes a toll on the economic well-being of teachers and their families, leading to:
  - ▶ Limited interest from students in higher ed
  - ▶ High turnover among programs in the field
  - ▶ Lack of incentive to invest time / money for PD
- ▶ There is perceived competition for talent between private and public programs, especially since public programs have higher compensation structures
  - ▶ The salary difference is even more severe for kindergarten programs, where teachers make twice as much as pre-k educators
- ▶ Private programs' capacity to raise salaries is limited due to the already high price of care

***"It's impossible to imagine paying an employee \$15-16 per hour with a benefit package, when you are only charging families \$1K per month"***

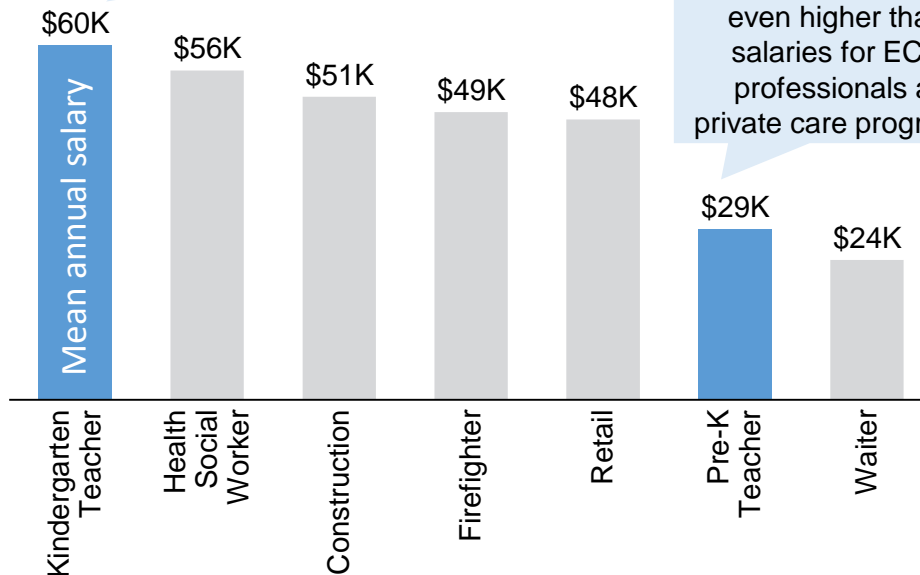
– Parent, New Castle

### Supporting Data and Perspectives

#### DE mean annual salary by various occupations

In DE, kindergarten teachers are paid more than double pre-K teachers

Pre-K teacher salaries represent school district comp structures which are even higher than salaries for ECE professionals at private care programs



In a NAEYC national survey **88%** of respondents indicated early childhood educators as being extremely / very important to their communities



## 6. Data to inform child/family needs

### Summary of key strategic issues



*Data is not being used to understand B-5 children and families' needs and improve the ECCE system*

#### Strategic issues and drivers

System Conditions

**Challenges with data entry and quality**

**Limited interaction between data systems across Delaware departments**

**Data is not actionable and does not inform design of programs/services**

**Data systems do not allow for an accurate count of unique children served**



#### Key data and insights to remember

**3** unique identifiers across systems

*"Quality and accurate data is not just needed to secure grant dollars...it is about understanding and reporting on the root causes of what B-5 children need"*

**15** different systems that contain data for B-5 children/families enrolled in programs/services across the state

**Only 22%** of survey respondents indicated that they **believe** their department is using data to inform design of child/family program/services



## 6. Data to inform child/family needs: Issue # 1

### Challenges with data entry and quality

#### Insights

- ▶ **There is a lack of a functional data governance model within and across departments**, which leads to:
  - ▶ Weak adoption of standard data management practices
  - ▶ Lack of data integration and quality issues
  - ▶ Lack of standard system documentation
- ▶ **Data collection and entry for enrollment in State programs happens in multiple places and in multiple ways across the State**, which makes reporting and use of data difficult

#### Why does this matter?

- ▶ Poor intake experiences could lead to **fewer families applying for programs and services**
- ▶ Lack of cohesion across data systems leads to manually intensive processes that **increase time and costs** and can also lead to **data quality issues** (e.g., requesting data from vendors)

#### Supporting Data and Perspectives

*"Lack of training / professional development has led to individuals not always knowing how to input data or check to make sure data is accurate and complete"*

*"Quite simply, there is not consistency in what and how data is collected"*

*"I think it was when I was typing in my case number because it just kept saying that it couldn't find my case, so I gave up on it."*  
– Parent, Sussex

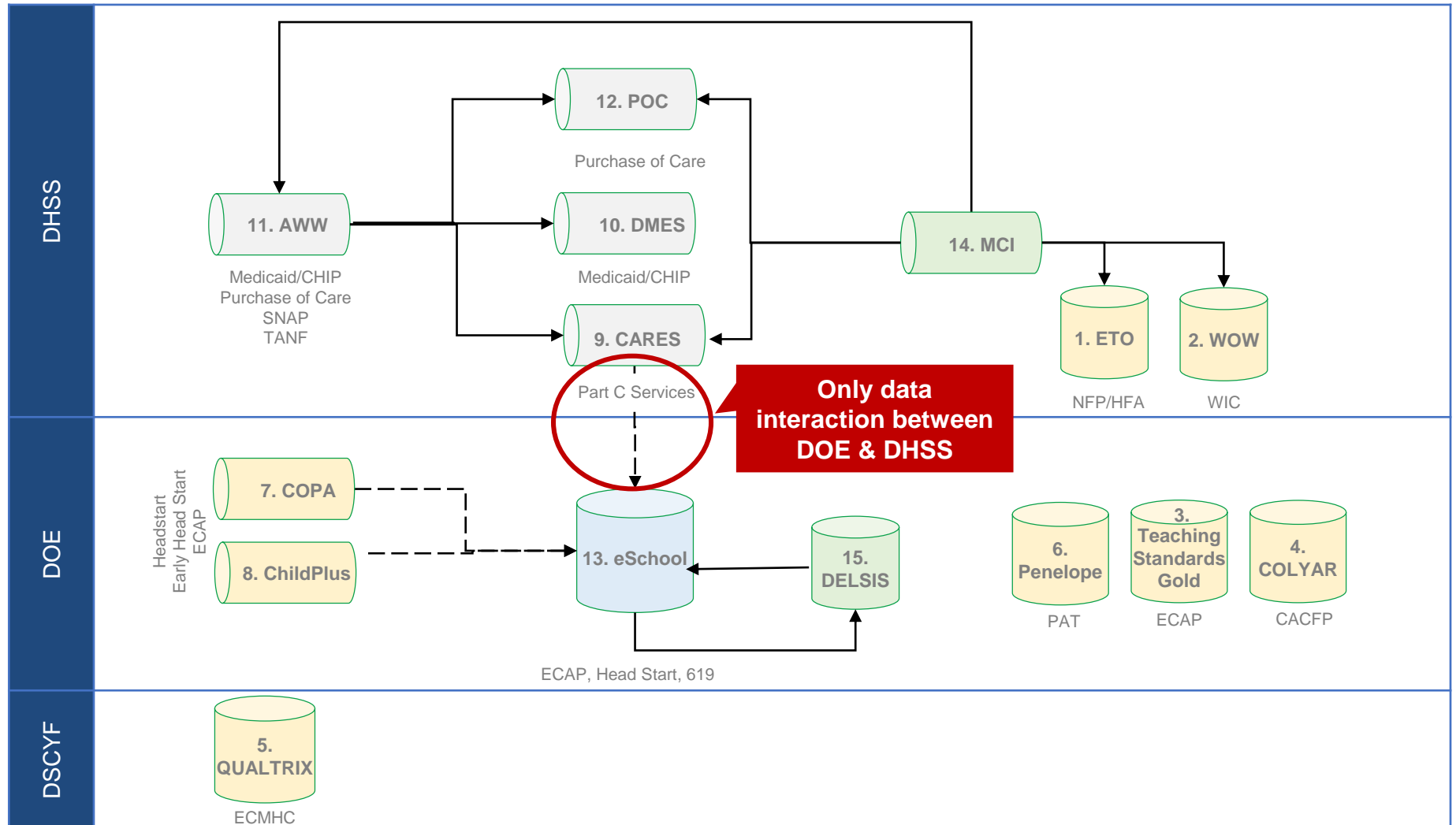
*"Every time I've tried to redo it online (recertification for Medicaid) I've had nothing but issues. So, I just haven't tried it since"*  
– Parent, Sussex

*"There is no online registration in the State of Delaware for kindergarten. So if I show up at Mt. Pleasant and then I discover my kid goes to Bancroft, they send me to Bancroft...In the same district, can't do it! Got to go to the physical school"*  
– Parent



## 6. Data to inform child/family needs: Issue # 2

Limited interaction between data systems across Delaware departments





## 6. Data to inform child/family needs: Issue # 3

Data is not actionable and does not inform design of programs/services

### Insights

- System stakeholders struggle to make data-driven decisions at work

*“Sure we collect data and lots of it, but I’m not sure we’ve taken a step back and reflected on whether we’re collecting the “right” data and whether it is actually used to make program/service adjustments”*

– Internal Stakeholder Interview

- They indicate that their departments similarly are not equipped with actionable data to inform design of programs and services

*“Our funding requires data collection, and we really only use it for reporting, so we are missing opportunities to report on trends or the root causes of the issues we see facing children and families”*

– Internal Stakeholder Interview

*“Quality and accurate data is not just needed to secure grant dollars...it is about understanding and reporting on the root causes of what B-5 children need”*

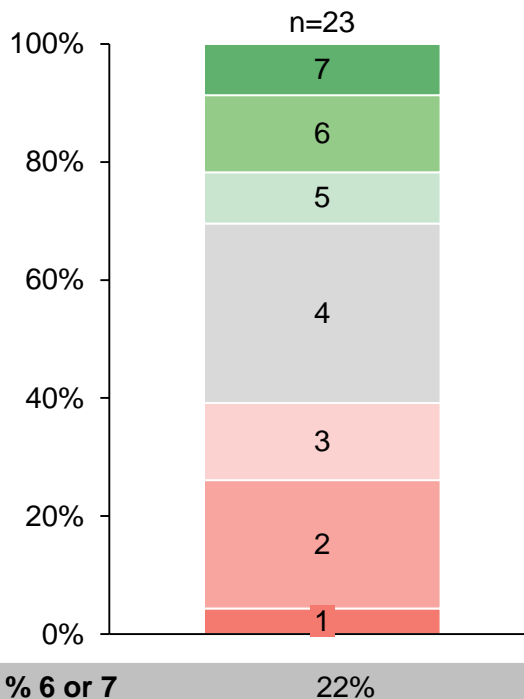
– Internal Stakeholder Interview

### Supporting Data and Perspectives

In my role, I can make data-driven decisions about what the children

I work with need

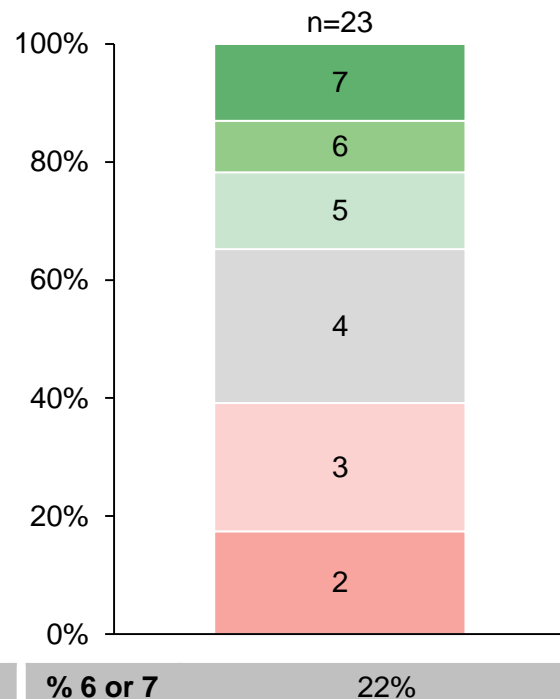
1 = “I strongly disagree”  
and 7 = “I strongly agree”



My department makes data-driven decisions about what

B-5 children need

1 = “I strongly disagree”  
and 7 = “I strongly agree”





## 6. Data to inform child/family needs: Issue # 4

### Data systems do not allow for an accurate count of unique children served

#### Insights

- ▶ There are 3 unique identifiers used across the 15 relevant B-5 systems
  - ▶ MCI within DHSS
  - ▶ Student ID within DOE
  - ▶ Parents as Teachers (PAT) identifier
- ▶ While the Student ID and MCI number are widely used within their respective departments, neither is consistently leveraged across the Delaware ECCE system and there are limited processes in place to connect the two

#### Why does this matter?

- ▶ It is currently not possible to arrive at a unique number of B-5 children that the system serves. As a result,
  - ▶ It is challenging to identify students who need services but are not receiving them
  - ▶ There is **no end-to-end view** of the timeline of services received, progression of children/families through programs, and impact assessment of the entire Delaware ECCE system

#### Supporting Data and Perspectives

##### Step 1: Calculate the minimum number served by the early childhood system:

The number of unduplicated children enrolled in **SNAP, TANF, POC, Medicaid, and CHIP**. using the MCI # to eliminate duplicates 30,073

**Total** 30,073

##### Step 2: Calculate the maximum number served by the early childhood system:

Minimum number of children served from Step 1 above 30,073

Total number of families with children age B-5 enrolled in the **WIC program**. *Could not eliminate duplicates because of vendor and data restrictions.* 11,988

The total number of children age B-3 enrolled in **Part C**. *Could not eliminate duplicates because of data format* 1,413

Total number of families with children age B-5 enrolled in the **Healthy Families America and Nurse Family Partnership programs**. *Could not eliminate duplicates because of vendor and data restrictions.* 277

Total number of children enrolled in **PAT Program**. *Could not eliminate duplicates because of how data is tracked* 490

The number of unduplicated children served by **ECAP, HeadStart and 619**, using student ID as a unique indicator to eliminate duplicates. *However, not possible to eliminate duplicates with the DHSS data* 3,129

Number of children enrolled in the **Early HeadStart** program. *Could not eliminate duplicates because data is not integrated with other DOE data.* 238

**Total** 47,608

**DRAFT** 42



## 7. Unified governance

### Summary of key strategic issues



*The existing ECCE governance structure in Delaware creates inefficiencies and impacts the family experience*

#### Strategic issues

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Family Pain Points | Families experience an inefficient ECCE system  |
| System Conditions  | Professionals and programs struggle to navigate the complex system  |
|                    | State program/service administrators are siloed, leading to challenges related to accountability and efficiency |



#### Key data and insights to remember

*“Right now everyone is working independently in their silos without clear marching orders towards a single ECCE vision. This results in a system that isn’t working for families, professionals, programs, or even state administrators”*

**11**  
ECCE divisions across  
DOE, DHSS, and DSYCF





## 7. Unified governance: Issues # 1 & # 2

Families, programs, and professionals struggle to navigate the complex system

### Insights

- ▶ **Families struggle to navigate the current system**, in part because of the **number of divisions and departments** responsible for ECCE
  - ▶ This leads to frustration and reduces use of programs and services
- ▶ **Programs and professionals similarly face challenges complying with regulations across many departments**
  - ▶ For example, programs cite the need to work across all three departments for licensure, quality ratings, and funding and the perception that they are continuously re-directed
  - ▶ This is further complicated by differences in requirements across Delaware (e.g., by county, district)
- ▶ These stakeholders also **cite how unified governance could improve communication and engagement**, particularly with new policy rollout

### Supporting Data and Perspectives

*"I called so many people but just nobody gives you information. Just trying to get information on a program – well, where do I go? How do I apply?"*

*"You got 11 sections of the government across three different departments, it's a hot mess"*

*"If you want to open a child care center you are licensed by the OCCL, reviewed by Stars, and then must work with POC in the DHSS. The system is incredibly complicated to navigate and with divisions who do not always speak to each other"*

*"Right now everyone is working independently in their silos without clear marching orders towards a single ECCE vision. This results in a system that isn't working for families, professionals, programs, or even state administrators"*

*"I feel like I'm always playing defense – we get a communication regarding new policies (e.g., POC, Stars redesign) and aren't actually engaged or able to provide feedback. If there was more coordination across departments, I think we could actually partner with the state more easily"*

# Agenda

- ▶ Process
- ▶ Overview of Landscape
- ▶ Opportunities for Delaware's ECCE System
- ▶ **Vision for Strategic Plan**



## PDG B-5 Vision

Aligning on the vision for the B-5 strategy will be a critical part of the strategic planning process

### Strategic Plan

- ▶ What is the **vision for Delaware's early childhood system**?
- ▶ What are the **key areas to address** to support availability and access?
- ▶ What **potential strategies** – co-developed with families and professionals – could help Delaware realize these opportunities?
- ▶ Who is **responsible for implementing** the plan?
- ▶ How will progress be **measured** and **tracked**?

Considering the key elements of the vision today....

...will inform the key tactical questions we will work on as group in the coming months

The aspiration is for this to become Delaware's next Birth to 5 five-year strategic plan



## PDG B-5 Vision

Delaware commits to **all children and families** having access to an **integrated early childhood system**, from birth through third grade, which provides **high-quality services** and an environment that supports their growth, development, and learning, and prepares them for **success in school and life**